

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A vacuum cleaner comprising:

a floor-engaging portion having a first air inlet on the underside thereof;

an upright portion pivotally connected at its lower end to said floor-engaging portion,

said upright portion having a socket in its upper end;

a detachable handle upstanding from the upper end of said upright portion and having a first end and a second end, one of said handle ends being received in said socket;

a rigid tubular duct extending along the handle between a second air inlet at said first end thereof and an outlet disposed intermediate opposite ends of said handle;

an elongate flexible hose having a first end and a second end, the first end of the hose being connected to said outlet on said handle; and

a valve having a first inlet port fluidly connected to said first air inlet, a second inlet port fluidly connected to the second end of said elongate flexible hose, an outlet port connected to a dust separation device and means for selectively connecting said valve outlet port to either said first or said second valve inlet ports[. . .]; and,

said valve comprising an actuator disposed in said socket, the actuator being arranged to configure the valve to connect said second air inlet to said dust separation device when the handle is removed from said socket and to connect said first air inlet to said dust separation device when the handle is fully inserted into said socket.

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Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 2 1, in which said first end of the handle is received in said socket in the upper end of said upright portion of the cleaner.

Claim 4 (Original) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 3, in which the second end of the handle is closed.

Claim 5 (Original) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 4, in which the second end of the handle is shaped to provide a hand grip which can be grasped by the user.

Claim 6 (Cancelled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 2 1, in which the handle is retained in the socket against a resilient bias by a catch.

Claim 8 (Original) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 1, in which the cross-sectional area of the rigid tubular duct extending along the handle preferably increases substantially from said second air inlet at said first end of the handle towards said outlet disposed intermediate opposite ends of said handle, the outer portion of the first end of the handle comprising an elongate portion

having a substantially uniform cross-sectional area, said socket being arranged to receive said elongate outer portion of the lower end of the handle.

Claim 9 (Original) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claims 8, in which the cross-sectional area of the elongate outer portion of the lower end of the handle at said second air inlet is 40%-60% less than the cross-sectional area of the rigid tubular duct adjacent said outlet of the handle.

Claim 10 (New) A vacuum cleaner comprising:

 a floor-engaging portion having a first air inlet on the underside thereof;

 an upright portion pivotally connected at its lower end to said floor-engaging portion, said upright portion having a socket in its upper end;

 a detachable handle upstanding from the upper end of said upright portion and having a first end and a second end, one of said handle ends being received in said socket and the handle is retained in the socket against a resilient bias by a catch;

 a rigid tubular duct extending along the handle between a second air inlet at said first end thereof and an outlet disposed intermediate opposite ends of said handle;

 an elongate flexible hose having a first end and a second end, the first end of the hose being connected to said outlet on said handle; and

 a valve having a first inlet port fluidly connected to said first air inlet, a second inlet port fluidly connected to the second end of said elongate flexible hose, an outlet port connected to a

dust separation device and means for selectively connecting said valve outlet port to either said first or said second valve inlet ports.

Claim 11 (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 10, in which said first end of the handle is received in said socket in the upper end of said upright portion of the cleaner.

Claim 12 (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 11, in which the second end of the handle is closed.

Claim 13 (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 12, in which the second end of the handle is shaped to provide a hand grip which can be grasped by the user.

Claim 14 (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 10, in which the valve comprises an actuator disposed in said socket, the actuator being arranged to configure the valve to connect said second air inlet to said dust separation device when the handle is removed from said socket and to connect said first air inlet to said dust separation device when the handle is fully inserted into said socket.

Claim 15 (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 10, in which the cross-sectional area of the rigid tubular duct extending along the handle preferably increases substantially from said second air inlet at said first end of the handle towards said outlet disposed intermediate opposite

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ends of said handle, the outer portion of the first end the handle comprising an elongate portion having a substantially uniform cross-sectional area, said socket being arranged to receive said elongate outer portion of the lower end of the handle.

Claim 16 (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claims 15, in which the cross-sectional area of the elongate outer portion of the lower end of the handle at said second air inlet is 40%-60% less than the cross-sectional area of the rigid tubular duct adjacent said outlet of the handle.